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ABSTRACT

These guidelines are designed to help British further education colleges develop programs for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties leading to competency-based qualifications. They are also helpful for local education authorities, Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), and others involved in the planning and provision of programs for students with learning difficulties aged 14-19. Section 1 discusses purposes and use of the guidelines and identifying the college's starting point. Section 2 groups the guidelines in 11 areas relating to development of access to work-based qualifications. Each area follows a common structure. A statement of principle underlying good practice is proposed. Key questions are designed to help colleges examine how far they have developed programs for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. The questions are supported by suggested action points giving guidance on what high quality provision is likely to demand of the college. For each section there is an illustrative example of interesting and relevant practice within further education colleges. The 11 areas are as follows: assumptions about learners, managing learning, learning programs/curricula, planning progression for students over 14, development of employment focus for learners, National Vocational Qualifications, recordkeeping, assessment, staff development, TECs, and guidance and counseling support. Appendixes include a listing of college contacts and ongoing initiatives and Further Education Unit publications. (YLB)

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GUIDELINES ON IMPLEMENTING PROVISION LEADING TO EMPLOYMENT LED QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

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TRANSITION INTO EMPLOYMENT is the title of a series of FEU publications which will support colleges developing employment-led provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.

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TRANSITION INTO EMPLOYMENT bulletin 1 (1991)
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TRANSITION INTO EMPLOYMENT bulletin 2 (1992)
A handbook on developing employment-led opportunities in FE colleges for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties (1992)

It is also the title of a continuing national project (RP616).

TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT

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GUIDELINES ON IMPLEMENTING PROVISION LEADING TO EMPLOYMENT IED QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

This project was managed by the
Further Education Unit in
association with the
Department of Employment.

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PREFACE

The principal theme of this publication is that employment is a realistic and achievable goal for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. In order to achieve this goal they need access to employment-led provision and qualifications. Underlying this approach is the recognition that what is ultimately required is a whole college approach emphasising flexibility, learner-centeredness and meeting individual needs. This document offers guidance to colleges for planning and establishing employment-led provision and qualifications for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Developing and assessing competence have been at the centre of the curriculum for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties for many years. Specialist tutors are often highly skilled in offering programmes that are competence based and learner led. The promotion of the competence model across the further education curriculum, in particular developments associated with the extension of the National Vocational Qualification Framework, suggests that colleges could learn much from an area which for too long has been seen, and has seen itself, as separate and marginal.

Experience in the area of competence-based learning and assessment for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties has not usually been allied to an employment focus and vocational qualifications. The Further Education Unit (FEU), the Training Enterprise and Education Directorate (TEED) and many others believe that now the time is right to do just that. The guidelines are aimed at helping colleges move towards patterns of provision and delivery that will open up vocational opportunities to this group of learners. At the same time they may offer colleges a model, and a resource, for wider developments associated with learner-centered provision, action planning, recording achievement, progression arrangements and NVQs.

The guidelines are based on recent joint FEU/TEED employment-led pieces of work. In particular The Implementation by Colleges of Further Education of Learning (and associated assessment procedures) leading to Competence-based Qualifications for Learners with Special Needs. This was a national project, undertaken in 1990, co-ordinated by Margaret Murdin of Wigan College and involving Millbrook College, Newham Community College, Bury Metropolitan College and Bishop Burton College of Agriculture.

The guidelines also draw on Transition into Employment (RP616) a continuing national project co-ordinated by Alison Boulton, Post-16 Development Officer, Somerset LEA. This employment-focused project involves more than 20 FE establishments and education agencies including: Bradford and Ilkley College, Coleg Glan Hafren (Cardiff), Pengwern Residential College (MENCAP), North Tyneside College, Otley College of Agriculture, Oaklands College, North Hertfordshire College, Bournemouth and Poole College, National Star Centre, Penwith College, South Devon College, Trowbridge College, Yeovil College, Hertfordshire LEA and the South West Association for Further Education and Training. This project began in September 1990 and ends in August 1992.

FEU acknowledges the considerable contribution to these guidelines by those working in the colleges, LEAs and national bodies and cited above and elsewhere in the text. FEU also recognises the invaluable advice and guidance it has received from many other practitioners across the country. In particular the members of the publication's readers group : Tony Beck of City College, Hertfordshire; Mariette Clare, Warwickshire LEA; Alison Boulton, Somerset LEA; Joan Donkin, Bradford & Ilkley Community; John Fox, Stockport TEC; David Gatherun, Warwickshire College of Agriculture; Mike Jelly, Great Stony School, Essex; and Liz Maudesley, Kingsway College.

Transition into Employment is also the title of a series of FEU publications focusing on employment opportunities for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. The first was a bulletin describing the work of RP616, published in November 1991; a second bulletin and a handbook complementing the work of this publication are planned for 1992.

FEU welcomes feedback on these guidelines and the other publications in this series.

Tony Tait

Development Officer

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SECTION 1

PURPOSES OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines are designed to help colleges develop provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties leading to competence-based qualifications such as NVQs. They should also serve as a guide to the work of local education authorities (LEAs), Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and others involved in the planning and provision of programmes for this group of learners.

The guidelines are designed to help:

* review existing college policies and practices;
* identify areas for development within the institution;
* implement new approaches to teaching and learning;
* offer models and examples drawn from the FE system.

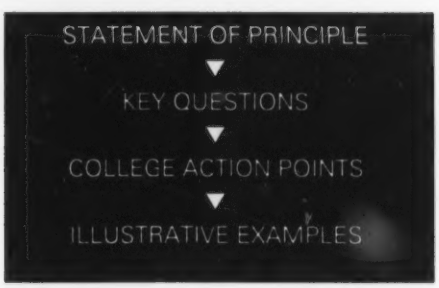
The guidelines are aimed at:

* specialist co-ordinators and tutors;
* senior college managers;
* staff development co-ordinators;
* LEA inspectors, advisors and officers;
* TEC officers and advisors.

The research on which the guidelines are based related mainly to students with learning difficulties in the 14-19 age range and the guidelines tend to reflect this. Nevertheless the principles and policies are *readily transferable to learners with different needs, in different modes of attendance and in different age ranges.*

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

The guidelines are grouped in 11 areas relating to development of access to employment-led qualifications. Each area follows a common structure:



A *statement* of principle underlying good practice is proposed for each area. The statement is followed by a series of *key questions* designed to help colleges examine how far they have developed employment-led provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. The questions are formative and indicate the kinds of policies, practices and procedures colleges should be developing.

The questions are supported by suggested *action points* giving guidance on what quality provision is likely to demand of the college.

For each section there is an *illustrative example* or samples of interesting and relevant practice drawn from continuing development within FE colleges.

The guidelines are not designed to be used in any specific or prescriptive way. They could be used by planners within LEAs, TECS and colleges as a way of reviewing policy, provision and practice across one or a number of institutions. They may be used as part of a college's agenda for change not only in relation to provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties but for learners in general. They could be used for cross-college or faculty/departmental purposes. They could be deployed in a variety of staff development contexts making use either of the whole or relevant individual sections.

FEU FRAMEWORK

Adult status

FEU is committed to the right of all people to the achievement of adult status. This principle has underpinned FEU activities in a number of areas including: integration, self-advocacy, multi-agency work and employment. Further education is seen as playing a vital role in enabling individuals with disabilities and learning difficulties to achieve the goal of adult status.

Internationally used definitions of adult status identify four key elements:

* personal autonomy and independence;
* economic self-sufficiency;
* a range of roles within the family;
* participation in the community.

(Young People with Handicaps; The Road to Adulthood OECD/CERI, 1986)

The concept of adult status offers a framework for planning and delivering provision, and is valuable in promoting shared aims between different educational phases, and between education, training and other agencies.

For learners with disabilities and learning difficulties, work and employment are key factors relating to all four elements of adult status cited above. Learners advocate this for themselves and FEU has responded with a number of initiatives aimed at encouraging the development of employment-led provision.

Despite the recession of the early 1990s, FEU believes that *employment is a legitimate and achievable goal for this group of learners* and is committed to supporting changes in expectations and practice that will help bring this about. This belief is based on the central role that employment plays in the development of adult status within our society, the right of these learners to take part in regular vocational programmes alongside their peers, and to be appropriately supported once they are in employment.

Opportunities in employment

Despite the current recession, employment trends for the 21st century hold potential for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. This stems from a number of factors including:

- underlying demographic trends;
- new technology as an aid to learning;
- new technology changing roles in work and patterns of employment;
- a new system of competence-led vocational qualifications (NVQs) which makes qualifications more accessible;
- changing the perceptions held by employers, and society in general, of people with disabilities and learning difficulties, and what they can achieve.

FE colleges have to ensure that, in partnership with employers and other local service providers, they are helping to translate the potential in this situation into employment opportunities and jobs.

Quality provision across the college

Many of the principles and practices encouraged in these guidelines have a wide application covering not just special provision but all provision that is learner centred, competence based and flexible.

FEU sees a growing convergence between the individualised competence-based approaches used for many years by special educational needs (SEN) specialists, and the teaching and learning strategies needed to deliver new curricula and qualifications such as NVQs. For this reason FEU hopes that these guidelines will relate to a wide range of college policies and practices.

One test of quality in the context of new arrangements for the government and funding of post-16 provision arising out of the White Paper *Education and Training for the 21st Century* will be the quality of participation. FE colleges will need to ensure that as well as increasing general levels of participation they are providing opportunities for all members of their community. Learners with disabilities and learning difficulties will require opportunities that lead to employment and this means access to vocational training and qualifications.

IDENTIFYING THE COLLEGE'S STARTING POINT

The extent to which provision has been developed for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties varies a great deal.

In very general terms provision in FE colleges across the country falls into one of four types:

TYPE 1 discrete provision in a remote annexe with no vocational dimension;

TYPE 2 discrete provision on the main campus with little integration or access to vocational opportunities;

TYPE 3 discrete provision on the main campus with some integration and access to vocational opportunities;

TYPE 4 integrated provision and access to vocational programmes with appropriate learning support.

These are not necessarily stages of development though often they have been. Colleges need not pass through each one in turn. On the contrary there is evidence that new providers find development of Type 4 provision more straightforward than those already committed to Types 1, 2 and 3, because the established providers become entrenched in familiar curriculum content and methods of delivery. Impetus for change may have to come from outside.

The guidelines aim to cater for providers of all types of provision. Some providers will relate more closely to Type 1 and others, to Type 3, or a whole set of intermediary stages which the model does not make explicit.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

FEU believes that colleges need to embed monitoring, evaluation and review processes within curriculum development practice. Scarce resources should not be committed to change and curriculum development without evaluation, and the guidelines aim to help in these processes of monitoring, evaluation and review.

TERMINOLOGY

In general the guidelines avoid the terms 'special needs', 'special educational needs' and 'SEN'. They refer instead to 'disability' and 'learning difficulty'. Those practitioners with expertise and responsibility for learners with

disabilities and learning difficulties are called 'specialists' rather than 'SEN tutors or co-ordinators'. However there are references to 'special needs' terms where appropriate, for example existing job titles, and particular college and LEA policies.

The text makes reference to employment-led qualifications. These include not only NVQs but also the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) currently under development, and a range of qualifications that are recognised as providing a foundation for entry into vocational provision.

SECTION 2

1. ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

PRINCIPLE

Full adult status is a legitimate aim for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. Employment is a primary aspect of adult status and all learners have an entitlement to employment-related qualifications and opportunities.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Is the college's committment to employment opportunities for all learners expressed in the college mission statement, policy papers and development plan ?
- How does the college aim to use NVQs to open up employment opportunities to all learners ?
- To what extent is this objective shared with college governors, institutional managers, mainstream vocational tutors, specialist tutors, specialist support staff, and technical, administrative and clerical staff ?
- Has the college reviewed the curriculum in relation to learners with disabilities and learning?
  - demographic and labour market trends?
  - technological changes in the workplace?
  - information technology (IT) as an aid to learning?
- To what extent is supported integration within regular provision seen as the appropriate means of providing for the majority of learners with disabilities and learning difficulties?
- In what ways are the skills of specialist tutors used to improve the provision across the college?
- What steps has the college taken to develop working relationships with other agencies such as schools, social services, health services, voluntary bodies and employers?

ACTION POINTS

- Ensure that the equal opportunities policy for the college covers the needs of learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Consider ways of ensuring that all learners get access to appropriate qualifications including NVQs.
- Explore the implications of IT in relation to :
  - providing enhanced support for individual learners;
  - extending opportunities for employment.
- Develop awareness amongst staff, managers and governors of the need for employment opportunities for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Establish as college policy that learners with disabilities and learning difficulties are expected to join regular provision with appropriate learning support.
- Develop an action plan with a timetable for implementation.
- Establish methods of keeping these developments under review including monitoring patterns of recruitment.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

At East Warwickshire College the terms of employment for full-time and associate lecturers include the following statement :

Students with Special Needs
'All lecturers may be expected to teach students with special needs, if necessary support and training will be provided.'

At Bradford and Ilkley College the college policy on learning support is described in the Senior Management Handbook as follows :

Where students with special educational needs receive discrete provision in specialist classes, the arrangements for recruiting them, co-ordinating their support and maintaining the data base present no problems and remain the responsibility of the Departments providing the discrete provision. As a matter of record, they should inform Central Student Services. Where, however, students with special educational needs are integrated into classes across the College, problems can occur. It is, therefore, important that all Departments who take such students ensure that the College's policy is supported by informing Central Student Services of every application from a student with special educational needs and confirmation that appropriate support is available. No students can be refused a place on a College course solely on the grounds of disability without the express approval of the Principal; but acceptance still requires confirmation that appropriate support and the resource to provide it is available. The responsibility for supporting such students lies with Central Student Services. Any other alternative implementation and support needs the agreement of the Central Service. If and where students on discrete courses extend their programmes of study by infill onto other College courses, Departments should inform Central Student Services.

2. MANAGING LEARNING WITHIN THE COLLEGE

PRINCIPLE

Learners with disabilities and learning difficulties are entitled to the full range of learning and other opportunities offered by the college. This entitlement is enhanced by structures that are flexible and cater for the needs of all individual learners.

KEY QUESTIONS

- When did the college last review the management of learning across the institution ?
- To what extent is access to vocational qualifications offered in flexible and accessible forms through modularisation, individualised learning programmes and open access workshops ?
- What steps has the college taken to ensure that all students have the same initial assessment and diagnosis of their learning needs ?
- Does the college offer individual learning support as part of the entitlement offer?
- Which senior manager has responsibility for managing learning support across the college?
- To what extent is provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties undertaken by a specialist unit or department?
- What strategies has the college developed to provide learners with a balance of integrated and discrete provision appropriate to individual need?
- Are students with disabilities and learning difficulties located in quality accommodation. Is this accommodation in an annexe away from the main site ?
- How accessible are library, catering and leisure facilities?

ACTION POINTS

- Review management of learning across the college focusing on:
  - accessibility of vocational qualifications to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties;
  - learning support structures.
- Develop college policies on:
  - initial diagnosis and assessment;
  - learning support.
- Develop organisational systems which allow for greater individual choice and more flexible access to provision.
- Ensure that a named senior manager is responsible for learning support across the college.
- Develop structures and a system of cross-college support including learning support.
- Ensure that learning support units and specialist facilities are located in good quality accommodation with access to vocational workshops, studios and classrooms.
- Locate specialist staff in accommodation shared with vocational and mainstream tutors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Bradford and Ilkley College students with disabilities and learning difficulties receive learning support that allows them to participate in a wide range of provision - see the Central Student Services Learner Support Listing and the Admissions Monitoring Pro forma.

3. LEARNING PROGRAMMES/CURRICULA

PRINCIPLE

Competence-based vocational qualifications are a legitimate goal for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. In order to access these qualifications learners require appropriate learning programmes/curricula.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How does the college review the structure and content of the learning programmes/curricula in light of the need to provide access to competence-based vocational qualifications?

- How do transitional learning programmes/curricula provide a foundation for access to competence-based vocational qualifications ?

- What are the elements of the transition curriculum ?

- How are learners with disabilities and learning difficulties provided with learning programmes/curricula which give access to a range of vocational opportunities in a variety of sectors?
  - what is the range of vocational opportunities ?
  - what are the sectors ?

- How does the college ensure that the learning programmes/curricula for students with disabilities and learning difficulties meet:
  - individual educational needs?
  - individual training needs and preparation for employment?

- How does the college ensure that there is coherence in the design of the learning programmes/curricula it provides for students with disabilities and learning difficulties?

- How does the college ensure that there is continuity of learning in the design of its learning programmes/ curricula?

- How does the college ensure that there is breadth and balance in the design of its learning programmes/curricula?

ACTION POINTS

- Undertake review of provision to examine how much access to vocational qualifications the college offers to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Work with special schools, mainstream schools, social services, voluntary agencies and others to develop a range of transitional programmes which provide learners with disabilities and learning difficulties with access to vocational qualifications.
- Ensure that curriculum entitlement applies to all learners and includes access to vocational provision and appropriate learning support.
- Design learning programmes which offer appropriate balance between core skills, core themes and vocational skills.
- Ensure that processes such as action planning, record keeping, guidance and support are part of all learning programmes.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

The Certificate of Pre-vocational Education (CPVE) course at Oaklands College provides a transitional curriculum with access to a wide variety of vocational areas. The module summaries are written in competence terms and CPVE is moving towards offering NVQ units. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities are integrated into this course as appropriate .

The Computer Workshop at Coleg Glan Hafren in Cardiff is funded by the County of South Glamorgan and the European Social Fund (ESF). It is a joint project between the county Education and Social Services Departments.

Students with learning difficulties have access to computer skills, office skills, engineering and media skills. They are achieving success in progressing through work placements into employment with major local companies such as Littlewooods, HTV, Habitat, Atlantic College and the St John Ambulance Association.

4. PLANNING PROGRESSION POST 14

PRINCIPLE

Students with disabilities and learning difficulties require support and guidance in making the transition between phases and institutions. This should begin with action planning from the age of 14 onwards. Schools, colleges and other providers should develop strong links to facilitate this process in the interest of the individual learners.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How does the college keep its links with feeder providers under review ?
- Is the college involved in 13+ reassessments for mainstream and special school pupils who have statements for special educational needs under the 1981 Education Act ?
- How has the college developed structured link programmes for students at 14+ with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- How does the college work with providers to design and develop these programmes ?
- In what ways do these programmes enhance access to vocational qualifications ?
- How do learners on these programmes get experience of the workplace ?
- How have local 14-18 initiatives such as the Technical Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and compacts involved students with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- What mechanisms are there to ensure that there is continuous support and guidance at 14+ ?

ACTION POINTS

- Review links with special schools and secondary schools.
- Involve the college in assessments at 13+ in special and mainstream schools to give early advice on what options are available and what programmes could be developed.
- Develop/enhance post-14 link programmes by involving special schools, secondary schools, careers services, employers and others designing programmes.
- Use 14-18 initiatives such as TVEI and compacts as a way of embedding access to vocational qualifications into provision for all groups of learners.
- Ensure that vocational specialists are :
  - involved in the design of 14-18 learning programmes;
  - involved in the delivery of 14-18 vocational programmes.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Lewisham College has developed cross-phase 14-19 transition programmes in collaboration with local special schools and mainstream providers. The programmes run over three to four years and offer continuity of learning for students as they develop and begin to make choices about their future.

Learners start out on a part-time link programme for 14-16 year olds. This serves as a preparation for transfer to a number of full-time post-16 college pathways. These offer learners routes towards a range of vocational qualifications and provision.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT FOCUS FOR LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

PRINCIPLE

Learners with disabilities and learning difficulties are entitled to provision leading to nationally recognised competence-based qualifications. This provision requires curriculum development towards the world of work and employment.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How does the college review the employment focus of its provision?
- To what extent are learners with disabilities and learning difficulties seen as part of the review process ?
- How do tutors co-ordinating provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties gain access to labour market intelligence ?
- What mechanisms have been established to encourage links between tutors of students with disabilities and learning difficulties, and local employers?
- In what ways do employers participate in the design and content of learning programmes for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties?
- How has work experience been integrated into the curriculum ?
- How has work experience been structured, monitored, assessed and accredited ?
- What kinds of additional support are offered to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties when they take up work placements ?

ACTION POINTS

- Each course and programme area should monitor and evaluate the outcomes of their provision in terms of attainment of vocational qualifications and jobs.
- Tutors and managers responsible for provision of learning opportunities for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties should have access to labour market intelligence through publications, contact with the careers service, local industry link bodies, etc.
- The college should encourage tutors to be pro-active in involving employers in the design and content of learning programmes for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- The college should work with employers and the careers service to develop work experience placements which offer additional learning support, and use strategies such as job coaching.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Bury Metropolitan College has provided employment preparation programmes for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties partly funded by the ESF which is offered to young people between 16-25.

It relies on an industry-linked rather than education-based model of learning and offers access to sectors such as manufacturing and warehousing, hairdressing, motor vehicle maintenance and construction.

Employability Package from *Enabled to Work* (1989)

EMPLOYABILITY PACKAGE

Research carried out involving employers, representatives of placement and preparation agencies and people with disabilities themselves has demonstrated a consensus about the general requirements which a young person needs to meet in order to be employable. This is the 'employability package'.

In order to be employable, it is thought that a young person should be:

- reliable
- conscientious
- responsible
- motivated to work
- able to relate to colleagues
- able to get to and from work
- able to understand and carry out instructions
- acceptable in terms of personal hygiene and self-presentation
- acceptable in terms of social behaviour
- able to respond pleasantly and co-operatively
- able to survive in the world of work
- able to work without constant supervision
- able to take the initiative
- able to keep work separate from other aspects of their life
- have an appropriate degree of personal autonomy

6. NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

PRINCIPLE

All learners should be entitled to access to nationally recognised qualifications at the appropriate level whether academic or vocational. There should also be access to units within qualifications so that credit may be accumulated over time through the National Record of Achievement (NRA).

KEY QUESTIONS

- In what ways are college development plans being influenced by the development of national vocational qualifications?
- How is staff awareness of NVQs being raised?
- To what extent does the college see NVQs as the primary route to employment for all learners?
- How are tutors of learners with disabilities and learning difficulties involved in NVQ developments within the college?
- How are vocational tutors adapting their provision and assessment techniques in ways which will:
  - make NVQs more accessible to all learners?
  - make NVQs more accessible to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties?
- What examples are there of vocational tutors and specialist staff working jointly on NVQ-led developments?
- Does the college draw on the expertise of specialist staff as a training and staff development resource in NVQ-related areas such as record keeping, action planning, guidance and competence-based learning and assessment?

ACTION POINTS

- Review provision in the light of NVQ developments.
- Ensure that tutors of students with disabilities and learning difficulties are involved in the awareness raising activities relating to NVQs that are taking place within the college.
- Set up joint teams to look at adaptation of provision and assessment techniques in the light of NVQs and with particular reference to providing greater access for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Develop programmes that can act as stepping stones to NVQ Level 1 qualifications.
- Provide joint programmes for specialist and vocational tutors which encourage joint planning and development activities around NVQs.
- Carry out a skills audit to identify staff who can offer training in areas such as action planning, guidance, record keeping, competence- based learning assessment and who will be a resource for NVQ-based staff development activities.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

As part of a college-wide initiative to implement NVQs, Newham Community College has begun work to offer NVQ units to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties in the following vocational areas :

● LCC	Level 1	Business Administration
● CGLI/HITB	Level 1	Hairdressing
● CGLI	Level 1	Catering (7000 series)
● NRTC	Level 1	National Retail Training Certificate

At Wigan College students are being helped to gain access to NVQs in catering. The Food Act 1990 makes food hygiene competences a requirement for all catering qualifications. Working with the Institute of Environmental Health Officers the college is developing learning and assessment materials for use with learning difficulties. This work is being carried out in collaboration with Dr B's Kitchen of Harrowgate, the Rathbone Society of Wigan and Nestle.

7. RECORD KEEPING

PRINCIPLE

Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. In order to assist this and to ensure continuity and coherence of learning, a system of continuous record keeping is essential. Record-keeping systems support learners in gaining accreditation for prior learning/achievement.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How does the college keep its record keeping under review?
- Is there a standardised system of record keeping in the college?
- Are the records kept on learners with disabilities and learning difficulties the same as those for other students ? If not, how and why do they differ?
- How have specialist schools, mainstream schools, training agents, employers, work experience providers, social services and health services been involved in the development of the record-keeping system?
- What channels of information exist between the college and feeder institutions or agencies?
- How do the records kept on learners with disabilities and learning difficulties report on a learner's background learning and training record, employment history, medical conditions, mobility needs, etc?
- How open is the record-keeping system to learners and their parents?
- How is confidentiality ensured?

ACTION POINTS

- Review existing college record-keeping system(s).
- Establish a standardised record-keeping system for the college.
- Develop record-keeping systems in partnership with special schools, mainstream schools, training agents, employers, work experience providers, social services and health services.
- Ensure that all the above institutions and agencies feed information into the college's record-keeping system by use of college pro formas.
- Ensure that the record-keeping system is user friendly to learners and reports on all the appropriate areas of need and support.
- Consider the implications of confidentiality and safeguards that may need to be built in.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

BOX 1
Milbrook College Initial Information Sheet and Action Plan

INITIAL INFORMATION SHEET

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Date Of Birth

Contact Name

Telephone:

Social Worke

Telephone:

Start Date:

Home Situat

VOCATIONAL :

HEALTH INFO

Name of Doc

Telephone:

How can I

How can st

Skills I n

Records I

I understa

Student's

INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLAN

Name:

Address:

Date Of Birth:

Start Date:

My needs:

Finishing Date:

My interests:

Goals that I wish to achieve:

In the near future

In the long term

How will these be achieved? What will I need to do?

SPECIAL NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PREPARATION OF INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLAN (IAP)

PERSONAL INTERESTS, e.g. television/radio/book likes):

COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITIES (e.g. clubs, pub, visits, eating out, sport)

USEFUL COMMENTS FROM SCHOOL, CAREERS SERVICE, CARER:

8 ASSESSMENT

PRINCIPLE

Students should be given the opportunity at all stages of their learning to be involved in the assessment process. It should not begin anew at each transition. Assessment should be made as flexible as possible to remove unnecessary barriers and optimise access to nationally recognised competence-based qualifications. Assessment should take place at the diagnostic, formative and summative stages.

KEY QUESTIONS

- In what ways does achievement in early educational phases earn recognition and credit within the college?
- How does the college establish learning needs at an initial stage?
- Is there a standard set of procedures for all learners?
- How does the college recognise and give credit for prior learning and achievement (APL)?
- How is self-assessment embedded within assessment processes across the institution?
- How has the college managed its resources in order to facilitate the development and assessment of competence towards NVQs?
- How does the college assess students on work experience?
- Who is involved in assessing students on work experience: specialist tutors, vocational tutors, supervisors in the workplace or joint arrangements?
- How has the college developed the skills of tutors and others in workplace-based assessment ?
- How are assessment techniques being changed in order to ensure that students with disabilities and learning difficulties have access to NVQS?

ACTION POINTS

- Use NVQ-led developments to review assessment methods across the college.
- Establish a common initial assessment procedure for all learners to include accreditation of prior achievement.
- Ensure that self-assessment is embedded into assessment methods.
- Develop assessment techniques around workplace simulation and mini-enterprise.
- Develop strategies for assessment in the workplace involving specialist tutors, vocational tutors, and workplace-based supervisors all working together.
- Establish a policy of negotiation of individual arrangements for the assessment of learners with disabilities and learning difficulties where this is appropriate.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Bishop Burton College of Agriculture has developed a training record for all students on the Youth Training Foundation Course. It is based on assessments in eight vocational areas :

* health and safety
* machinery skills
* estate maintenance
* applied science
* computer awareness and practice
* animals
* plants
* personal skills

Personal Care, one of Milbrook College's Units.

Caring for the Elderly
PERSONAL CARE (2)
Placement
Trainee Name
COMPETENCE ACHIEVED
COMMENTS
THE STUDENT CAN:
HELP CLIENT TO BATH N BATHROOM
BED BATH CLIENTS
BATH CLIENTS
Performance criteria / ie standard required
1. Health and safety observed at all times
2. Assist client in/out of bath safely
3. Client given privacy and opportunity to do as much for themselves as possible
4. Towels, clothes, soap and toiletries prepared before beginning
5. Water temperature and depth is safe
5. Bath is cleaned after use
7. Client assisted properly and quickly without getting wet
8. Client dried properly and quickly without getting cold
9. Any skin damage or burns reported to nurse in charge

9. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

PRINCIPLE

Learners with disabilities and learning difficulties are entitled to provision leading to employment-led competence-based vocational qualifications. Staff development and training for both specialist and mainstream tutors will be needed in order to develop appropriate opportunities.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What level of awareness of NVQ-led developments exists in the college amongst:

a) senior managers ?
b) departmental managers ?
c) mainstream tutors ?
d) specialist SEN tutors ?
e) support staff ?

- What form has NVQ staff training and development taken for:

a) senior managers ?
b) departmental managers ?
c) mainstream tutors ?
d) specialist SEN tutors ?
e) support staff ?

- In what ways have NVQ/Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) funding been used to train specialist tutors alongside mainstream tutors?

- How has the training programme prepared vocational tutors to deliver individualised learning programmes including provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties?

- How has the training programme prepared vocational tutors to employ new techniques in assessment?

- How are staff being trained to work as learning support tutors, employment support tutors and job coaches?

- How is the college offering training for employers which could enable them to offer NVQs to their employees?

- Are the skills of specialist staff in areas such as action planning, record keeping, guidance and counselling, competence-based teaching, and learning and assessment being used as a resource in college NVQ staff development programmes?

- How is the college using FEU publications such as *Enabled to Work, Learning Support, Developing Self-Advocacy Skills, Working Together, Individuality in Learning* and *Adult Status for All?*
(See Appendix 2)

ACTION POINTS

- Use NVQ staff development funding to train vocational staff and specialist staff jointly.
- Set up a programme to train staff to act as learning support tutors, employment support tutors and job coaches.
- Explore development of training for employers to enable them to offer NVQS to their employees.
- Draw on the expertise of specialist staff to act as trainers in areas such as action planning, record keeping, guidance, counselling, individual teaching techniques, and individual and competence- based learning and assessment.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

At Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture there is an NVQ Level 1 in Land Industries which is offered to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. Staff are involved in a staff development programme making selective use of the Skill/FEU staff development and training pack *Learning Support*.

Learning Support includes sections covering :

- curriculum/training programme design and evaluation strategies
- devising individual learning programmes
- assessment and review
- training/teaching and learning strategies
- design and adaptation of learning materials
- technical aids and information technology
- guidance and support

10 TRAINING AND ENTERPRISE COUNCILS (TECs)

PRINCIPLE

Provision of access to employment-led competence-based vocational qualifications for all learners and especially for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties requires partnership and collaboration with organisations external to the college.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What links have been developed between the college and the local TEC ?
- To what extent is the TEC aware of the college's provision for students with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- Have TEC officers visited the college ?
- Have TEC officers visited the provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- Does the TEC have a specially appointed officer for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- What is the name of the TEC officer responsible for training and education of learners with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- What indicators of quality does the TEC use in relation to provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties?
- What joint work has been done by the college with the TEC to develop some outcome-based funding models which encourage rather than hinder the development of provision for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties ?
- How is the TEC working with LEAs and other agencies such as voluntary bodies, health service, etc. to provide comprehensively for people with learning difficulties and disabilities ?

ACTION POINTS

- Establish links with the TEC and its named officers.
- Develop an understanding with the TEC of the college's priorities in relation to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties through contacts and visits.
- Undertake joint work with the TEC to establish performance indicators and models of outcome-based funding which encourage and do not hinder the development of provision for people with disabilities and difficulties.
- Offer the expertise of college tutors including specialist tutors to provide training for TEC staff related to employment and opportunities for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Hertfordshire TEC has a disability group involving a specialist careers officer and an advisor. The TEC is also appointing a special needs co-ordinator who will liaise with staff in colleges working with students with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the North East, Weirside TEC has similar arrangements.

Bradford and Ilkley College has a TEC representative on the special needs advisory group of the governing body.

11. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SUPPORT

PRINCIPLE

The development of more individualised and flexible provision by FE colleges which offers the learner more choice creates greater need for guidance to ensure that choices are well informed and lead to coherent and realistic learning programmes.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How does the college keep its guidance and counselling systems under review?
- To what extent are guidance and counselling part of the entitlement of all the learners in the college?
- How does the college involve special schools, mainstream schools and other agencies in guiding learners into appropriate provision in college?
- What mechanisms exist to guide students from one stage to the next?
- How is action planning used as a means of offering guidance to students to help them make choices?

ACTION POINTS

- Review existing college and guidance services.
- Develop a college policy on guidance and counselling.
- Ensure that guidance is embedded into all provision to enable learners to make informed choices.
- Establish links with other local agencies offering guidance and counselling services.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Bradford & Ilkley College offers individual support for learning as a regular part of the entitlement offered. Support for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties is based with central student services and offered as a cross-college service alongside the counselling service, careers service and gender-related work.

This has led to a co-ordinated approach with joint training sessions, some shared staffing and preparation of policy guidelines covering areas such as :

- guidelines on responding to students with disturbed behaviour and delivery of appropriate support;
- principles to follow where deaf students require an interpreter for careers and counselling interviews.

SECTION 3

CONCLUSION - A CHARTER FOR LEARNERS

These guidelines are part of an ambitious agenda for the post-16 education service related to what could be described as a charter for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties in relation to vocational provision, qualifications and job opportunities.

It is hoped that as colleges develop their offers to learners the notion of 'specialness' will be replaced by one of 'entitlement'. Access to provision, learner centeredness, action planning, guidance, appropriate learning support and so on should become the norm.

These guidelines therefore could not only help to establish an entitlement for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties but for all learners within FE colleges.

APPENDIX 1 POINTS OF CONTACT

SELECTION OF COLLEGE CONTACTS

These are the contacts for work referred to in the text and in an earlier FEU publication, *Transition into Employment 1*.

Bishop Burton College of Agriculture, (N. Humberside)	Charlie Saunders
Bournemouth and Poole College	Ros St Clayre
Bradford and Ilkley College	Joan Donkin/ Judith Knifton
Bury Metropolitan College	Barbara Heron
Coleg Glan Hafren, Cardiff	Nichola Harris/ Christina Francis
Oaklands College, Herfordshire	Toni Bec/Paul Smith
Pengwern Hall, Mencap Residential College	John Harris
National Star Centre, Cheltenham	Helen Steel
Milbrook College (now Liverpool Community College)	Angela O'Donoghue
Newham Community College	Sally Faraday
North Herts College	Helen Reason/Eileen Parker
North Tyneside College	Ann Baynes/Paul Lawrence
Otley College of Agriculture, Suffolk	Alan Hilliard/ Jeremy Linsell
Penwith College, Cornwall	Simon Coley
South Devon College Torquay	Jaqui Malek
Trowbridge College, Wiltshire	Alun Maddocks
Yeovil College, Somerset	Di Wraight

SELECTION OF ONGOING INITIATIVES

Curriculum Development and Assessment related to National Proficiency Tests
Contact: Tessa Prior, Warwickshire College of Agriculture

Delivery and assessment for basic food hygiene certificate
Contact: Christine Jones, Wigan College of Technology

Utilising information technology to improve access through assessment and support
Contact: Steve Broadbent, Oldham College

Competence-based qualification project - hairdressing NVQ
Contact: Daryll Moody, Castle College, Sheffield

Community care project to improve employment opportunities
Contact: Phil, Blundell, Continuing Education Dept, Birmingham City Council

Liaison with TECs in respect of Equal Opportunities
Contact: Lesley Oates, Northern Council of FE, Newcastle upon Tyne

Work preparation award - record of achievement
Contact: Roy Ainscough, East Midlands FE Council, Nottingham

Exploring progression routes through CPVE to Work
Contact: Phil Walkley, Swansea College, South Wales

Progressing into Employment for Students and Trainees with Disabilities
Contact: Graham Hills, Yorkshire & Humberside Association for FHE (YAFHE)

LEA, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CONTACTS

FEU database	Tony Tait/Sheila Browning
Hertfordshire LEA	Jill Aitchison
NCVO	Marian Mardall
NCVQ	Tim Etherton
Rathbone Society	Ann Weinstock
SKILL	Deputy Director
South West Association for Further Education and Training	Penny Crowther
TEED	Simon Pugh/Ann Lidster

Alison Boulton co-ordinator of Transition into Employment (RP616) can be contacted at:
ABE Centre
Blue School Annexe
Portway Avenue
Wells
Somerset BA5 2QF
tel: 0749 675430

FEU is developing a database of intiatives and contacts in this area. For further information please contact Tony Tait, Development Officer, FEU, Citadel Place, Tinworth St, London SE11 5EH (071 960 1280).

APPENDIX 2
FEU PUBLICATIONS

FEU publications relevant to developing employment-led work include:

Adult Status for All (1991)

Adults with Special Needs : A curriculum perspective

The Core Skills Initiative (1990)

Developing Self-Advocacy Skills (1990)

Flexible Colleges : Access to learning and qualifications in further education (1991)

Part 1 Priorities for action
Part 2 A planning handbook

Implementing NVQs in FE

Individuality in Learning (1991)

Learning by Doing (1988)

Learning Support (1989)

Marketing Education : A whole college approach to marketing Special Needs (1987)

NVQ bulletins 1,2,3 (1988)

NVQs in FE (forthcoming)

Planning FE - Equal opportunities for people with disabilities (1990)

Quality Matters (1991)

Towards a Competence-based System (1984)

Towards a Framework for Entitlement (1989)

VET Briefing Notes - Administration, Business and Commercial (1990)

VET Briefing Notes - Retail (1998)
VET Briefing Notes - Construction (forthcoming)
VET Briefing Notes - Engineering (forthcoming)
VET Briefing Notes - Hairdressing (forthcoming)

Working Together series (1989)
- Work
- Self-Advocacy
- Technology

FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT

Objectives

The objects for which the **Further Education Unit (FEU)** is established are to promote, encourage and develop the efficient provision of further education in the United Kingdom and for that purpose:

a) to review and evaluate the range of existing further education curricula and programmes and to identify overlap, duplication, deficiencies and inconsistencies therein;
b) to determine priorities for action to improve the provision of further education and to make recommendations as to how such improvement can be effected;
c) to carry out studies in further education and to support investigations of and investigations in, and the development of, further education curricula and to contribute to and assist in the evaluation of initiatives in further education;
d) to disseminate and publish information and to assist in the dissemination and publication of information about recommendations for and experiments and developments in further education.

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